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9  
10 IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
11 FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA  
12 SAN FRANCISCO DIVISION

13  
14 **MARK AARON HAYNIE, THE**  
**CALGUNS FOUNDATION, INC., and THE**  
**SECOND AMENDMENT FOUNDATION,**  
**INC.,**

15 Plaintiffs,

16 v.  
17

18 **KAMALA HARRIS, Attorney General of**  
**California (in her official capacity) and**  
**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF**  
**JUSTICE, and DOES 1 TO 20,**

19 Defendants.  
20  
21

22 10-cv-1255-SI  
23

24 **REPLY IN SUPPORT OF MOTION TO**  
**DISMISS THIRD AMENDED**  
**COMPLAINT**

25 Date: February 28, 2014  
Time: 9 a.m.  
Courtroom: 10  
Judge: The Honorable Susan Illston  
Trial Date: N/A  
Action Filed: 3/25/2010  
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

2			Page
3	Argument .....		1
4	I.    Plaintiffs' vagueness claims are not ripe .....	1	
5	A.    The allegations of the ACC regarding plaintiff Richards are insufficient on the issue of firearms ownership .....	1	
6	B.    The allegations of the ACC regarding plaintiff Haynie fail to demonstrate "reasonable fear" of prosecution .....	2	
7	C.    Plaintiffs' allegations are insufficient to establish ripeness .....	3	
8	II.    Plaintiffs do not meet the standards for injunctive relief.....	4	
9	III.    The AWCA is not constitutionally vague .....	7	
10	A.    Plaintiffs' focus on arrests demonstrates the fatal flaw in their argument .....	7	
11	B.    Alleged police misinterpretation of the AWCA does not establish vagueness.....	8	
12	Conclusion.....		10

1  
2                   **TABLE OF AUTHORITIES**  
3

	<u>Page</u>
4 <b>CASES</b>	
5 <i>Cantrell v. City of Long Beach</i> 6                    241 F.3d 674 (9th Cir. 2001).....	5
7 <i>Chaker v. Preciad</i> 8                    2010 WL 2491421 (C.D. Cal. 2010).....	7
9 <i>City of Los Angeles v. Lyons</i> 10                  461 U.S. 95, 103 S. Ct. 1660, 75 L. Ed. 2d 675 (1983).....	4, 5, 6, 7
11 <i>Dickerson v. Napolitano</i> 12                  604 F.3d 732 (2d Cir. 2010).....	8
13 <i>First Vagabonds Church of God v. City of Orlando</i> 14                  610 F.3d 1274 (11th Cir. 2010).....	8, 9
15 <i>Golden v. Zwickler</i> 16                  394 U.S. 103 (1969).....	3
17 <i>Hawkins v. Comparet-Cassani</i> 18                  251 F.3d 1230 (9th Cir. 2001).....	5
19 <i>Haynie v. Harris</i> 20                  2011 WL 5038357 (N.D. Cal. 2011) .....	4, 7
21 <i>In re Gilead Sciences Sec. Litig.</i> 22                  536 F.3d 1049 (9th Cir. 2008) .....	2
23 <i>In re Perdue</i> 24                  221 Cal. App. 4th 1070 (2013).....	8
25 <i>In re TFT-LCD (Flat Panel) Antitrust Litig.</i> 26                  785 F. Supp. 2d 835 (N.D. Cal 2011) .....	2
27 <i>LaDuke v. Nelson</i> 28                  762 F.2d 1318 (9th Cir. 1985) .....	4, 5
29 <i>MedImmune, Inc. v. Genentech, Inc.</i> 30                  549 U.S. 118 (2007).....	4, 5
31 <i>Texas v. United States</i> 32                  523 U.S. 296, 118 S. Ct. 1257, 140 L. Ed. 2d 406 (1998).....	3
33 <i>United States v. Dang</i> 34                  488 F.3d 1135 (9th Cir. 2007) .....	9

**TABLE OF AUTHORITIES**  
**(continued)**

	<u>Page</u>
2	
3	<i>Valle del Sol Inc. v. Whiting</i>
4	732 F.3d 1006 (9th Cir. 2013) ..... 2
5	
6	<i>Western Mining Council v. Watt</i>
7	643 F.2d 618 (9th Cir. 1981) ..... 3
8	
9	<i>Wolfson v. Brammer</i>
10	616 F.3d 1045 (9th Cir. 2010) ..... 3
11	
12	<b>STATUTES</b>
13	
14	California Penal Code
15	§§ 30500, et seq. ..... 1
16	§ 30510 ..... 7
17	§ 30515 ..... 7
18	§ 30520 ..... 5
19	§ 31115 ..... 5
20	
21	<b>CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS</b>
22	
23	United States Constitution
24	Article III ..... 2, 3, 5

## INTRODUCTION

Plaintiffs' effort to obtain an injunction against enforcement of California's Assault Weapons Control Act (Cal. Penal Code §§ 30500, et seq., hereafter "AWCA") based upon allegations that the AWCA is unconstitutionally vague fails to present a case or controversy that may be adjudicated in federal court. Defendants have shown that Plaintiffs lack standing, fail to allege facts demonstrating an unconstitutionally vague law, and present unripe claims. The Amended Consolidated Complaint must be dismissed due to these defects.

## ARGUMENT

## I. PLAINTIFFS' VAGUENESS CLAIMS ARE NOT RIPE

In the moving papers, Defendants argued that the allegations of Plaintiffs' Third Amended Consolidated Complaint ("ACC") demonstrate that Plaintiffs do not allege facts sufficient to present a case or controversy ripe for adjudication. It noted that the allegations in the ACC affirmatively demonstrate that one of the Plaintiffs no longer own guns, demonstrating that no present controversy exists as to him, and the allegations as to the other Plaintiff's present gun ownership were inconclusive. It asserted that absent allegations that the individual plaintiffs have some present stake in the interpretation of California's assault weapons laws, the ACC does not present ripe claims for adjudication.

In response, Plaintiffs contend that it may be inferred that one of them (Richards) possesses semiautomatic firearms, and that while the second one (Haynie) does not, his “reasonable fear” of prosecution should he subsequently obtain such firearms in the future is sufficient to establish ripeness. Both claims fail.

#### **A. The Allegations of the ACC Regarding Plaintiff Richards Are Insufficient on the Issue of Firearms Ownership**

Regarding Plaintiff Richards, Plaintiffs contend that the allegation in paragraph 61 of the ACC that “two rifles and a pistol” were returned to Richards “following the dismissal of the first case against him” demonstrates that he currently possesses firearms. Opp., p. 9. In addition, Plaintiffs argue that “it can be reasonably inferred” that “he also recovered his firearms from the arresting agency after the dismissal of the second case.” Opp., p. 9. While it is true that the Court

1 must assume that the ACC's allegations are true and must draw all reasonable inferences in  
 2 Plaintiffs' favor, "the court is not required to accept as true 'allegations that are merely  
 3 conclusory, unwarranted deductions of fact, or unreasonable inferences.'" *In re TFT-LCD (Flat  
 4 Panel) Antitrust Litig.*, 785 F. Supp. 2d 835, 839 (N.D. Cal 2011), quoting *In re Gilead Sciences  
 5 Sec. Litig.*, 536 F.3d 1049, 1055 (9th Cir.2008). And it is not a reasonable inference that Richards  
 6 possesses firearms of the type necessary to even begin to establish a ripe claim. The ACC's use  
 7 of the past-tense (ACC ¶ 55 [Richards' seized firearms "were" semiautomatic guns]), and the lack  
 8 of any actual allegation that he continued to possess them is telling.

9 Plaintiffs could have simply and clearly alleged that Richards presently possesses firearms  
 10 that might be within the scope of California's Assault Weapons Control Act. They did not. This  
 11 failure establishes a lack of a ripe claim to be adjudicated.

12 **B. The Allegations of the ACC Regarding Plaintiff Haynie Fail to  
 13 Demonstrate "Reasonable Fear" of Prosecution**

14 Plaintiffs acknowledge that Plaintiff Haynie does not presently own a firearm, but maintain  
 15 that he nonetheless presents a ripe claim. Opp., p. 9. Plaintiff Haynie's reliance on the line of  
 16 cases permitting a challenge based on a "reasonable fear" of prosecution is misplaced. In *Valle  
 17 del Sol Inc. v. Whiting*, 732 F.3d 1006, 1014-15 (9th Cir. 2013), a challenge to Arizona statutes  
 18 criminalizing the harboring of unauthorized immigrants, the plaintiff was a pastor at a church  
 19 where 80 percent of the congregation were unauthorized immigrants. In the complaint at issue  
 20 the pastor alleged that she "provides transportation and shelter to members of her congregation,  
 21 including those who are unauthorized aliens, on a daily basis." *Ibid.*, internal quotation marks  
 22 omitted. The Court concluded that the allegations of the complaint that plaintiff provided, and  
 23 intended to continue to provide, banned services and shelter to unauthorized immigrants provided  
 24 the necessary "credible threat" of prosecution necessary for Article III standing. 732 F.3d at  
 25 1015.

26 In contrast to the showing of the plaintiff in *Valle Del Sol*, Plaintiff Haynie's allegations are  
 27 premised not on his present and continuing conduct, but upon something that may or may not  
 28 occur in the future. Haynie asserts that his fear of wrongful arrest is "ripe for review" because he

1 intends to “continue engaging” in his Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms “*by*  
 2 *reacquiring* a firearm like the one that got him arrested.” Opp., p. 9, citing ACC ¶¶33-34,  
 3 emphasis added. But Haynie has alleged only that “he may suffer” wrongful arrests “*if he*  
 4 *reacquires* a firearm.” ACC, ¶ 33-34[emphasis added]. The fact that Haynie does not own a  
 5 firearm and relies only on the possibility that he might obtain one in the future fails to  
 6 demonstrate a case ripe for adjudication.

7 This case is more in line with *Western Mining Council v. Watt*, 643 F.2d 618 (9th Cir.  
 8 1981) (Opp., p. 10, fn. 1) than *Valle Del Solle*. *Western Mining Council* expressly held that a  
 9 complaint alleging only generalized “fears of prosecution” and presenting merely “a *possibility*  
 10 that plaintiffs may *eventually* be prosecuted” could not be adjudicated because “a hypothetical  
 11 threat is insufficient to satisfy either the ‘case or controversy requirement’ of Art. III, s 2, or the  
 12 ‘actual controversy’ requirement of the Declaratory Judgment Act.” 643 F.2d at 626, emphasis  
 13 added; see also *Wolfson v. Brammer*, 616 F.3d 1045, 1064 (9th Cir. 2010), quoting *Texas v.*  
 14 *United States*, 523 U.S. 296, 300, 118 S. Ct. 1257, 140 L. Ed. 2d 406 (1998) (“A claim is not ripe  
 15 for judicial resolution ‘if it rests upon contingent future events that may not occur as anticipated,  
 16 or indeed may not occur at all’”).

### 17       C. Plaintiffs’ Allegations Are Insufficient to Establish Ripeness

18 The harms alleged regarding Plaintiff Haynie will occur only “if” he obtains a weapon in  
 19 the future. ACC ¶¶ 33-34. Likewise, the allegations in the ACC regarding the weapons  
 20 ownership of Plaintiff Richards implicitly concede that his claim is also contingent; the past-tense  
 21 is used to describe his gun ownership, and no allegation that he presently owns weapons  
 22 potentially subject to the AWCA can be found. Accordingly, as pleaded, it is “wholly conjectural  
 23 that another occasion might arise” when Plaintiffs Haynie and Richards “might be prosecuted”  
 24 under the AWCA and the bare assertion that Plaintiffs might acquire weapons in the future “is  
 25 hardly a substitute for evidence that this is a prospect of ‘immediacy and reality.’” *Golden v.*  
 26 *Zwickler*, 394 U.S. 103, 109 (1969). Because the ACC presents claims that are contingent upon  
 27  
 28

1 Plaintiffs acquiring weapons in the future, the ACC fails to present ripe claims which can be  
 2 adjudicated.<sup>1</sup>

3 **II. PLAINTIFFS DO NOT MEET THE STANDARDS FOR INJUNCTIVE RELIEF**

4 In the order dismissing the First Amended Complaint in this case, and permitting Plaintiffs  
 5 to file a further amended complaint, this Court noted that “Plaintiffs seeking equitable relief must  
 6 also show ‘irreparable injury, a requirement that cannot be met where there is no showing of any  
 7 real or immediate threat that the plaintiff will be wronged again—a “likelihood of substantial and  
 8 immediate irreparable injury.’”<sup>2</sup> *City of Los Angeles v. Lyons*, 461 U.S. 95, 111, 103 S. Ct. 1660,  
 9 75 L. Ed. 2d 675 [(1983)] (internal citation omitted).” (*Haynie v. Harris*, 2011 WL 5038357  
 10 (N.D. Cal. 2011.), p. \*6.) This Court concluded that the First Amended Complaint had not met  
 11 the requirements of *Lyons*: “Under the *Lyons* standard, to show a real and immediate threat and  
 12 demonstrate a case or controversy, Haynie and Richards would have to allege either that all law  
 13 enforcement officers in California always arrest any citizen they come into contact with who is  
 14 lawfully in possession of a weapon with a bullet button, or that the DOJ has ordered or authorized  
 15 California law enforcement officials to act in such a manner.” (*Id.*, p. \*7.) This Court expressly  
 16 warned Plaintiffs to allege facts “demonstrating that they have standing” if they wished to pursue  
 17 their dismissed injunctive and declaratory relief claims. (*Haynie v. Harris*, 2011 WL 5038357, p.  
 18 \*10.)

19 In their Opposition, Plaintiffs do not directly address their compliance with the Court’s  
 20 prior order. Instead, they maintain that “Defendants ask too much of the holding” in *Lyons* and  
 21 suggest that “Plaintiff need only establish a credible threat of enforcement” to obtain “an  
 22 injunction against governmental enforcement of an allegedly unlawful statute or regulation.”  
 23 Opp., p. 10. Citing *MedImmune, Inc. v. Genentech, Inc.*, 549 U.S. 118, 128 (2007) and *LaDuke v.*  
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25  
 26 <sup>1</sup> As this Court previously observed in the order dismissing the First Amended Complaint,  
 27 the standing of the institutional Plaintiffs in this case (The Calguns Foundation and The Second  
 28 Amendment Foundation) is derived from the standing of their members. *Haynie v. Harris*, 2011  
 WL 5038357, at \*9-10. As before, to the extent that the individual Plaintiffs lack standing due to  
 their presentation of unripe claims, the institutional Plaintiffs similarly lack standing.

1      *Nelson*, 762 F.2d 1318 (9th Cir. 1985), Plaintiffs maintain that they have pleaded sufficient facts  
 2 to meet the standards for injunctive relief. Opp., pp. 11-12. Not so.

3      Here, Plaintiffs seek an injunction against state officials involved in the administration of  
 4 California's criminal justice system.<sup>2</sup> Specifically, the ACC seeks an injunction from this Court  
 5 stopping enforcement of the AWCA unless and until DOJ "issues appropriate regulations,  
 6 bulletins, or memoranda to prevent wrongful arrests of law-abiding citizens." ACC, Prayer for  
 7 Relief, p. 27. As the Supreme Court held in *Lyons*, "recognition of the need for a proper balance  
 8 between state and federal authority counsels restraint in the issuance of injunctions against state  
 9 officers engaged in the administration of the states' criminal laws in the absence of irreparable  
 10 injury which is both great and immediate." *City of Los Angeles v. Lyons*, 461 U.S. at 112. The  
 11 Ninth Circuit authorities relied upon by Plaintiffs (Opp., p. 12) expressly note this factor. (See  
 12 *LaDuke v. Nelson*, 762 F.2d at p. 1324 (noting "prudential limitations circumscribing federal  
 13 court intervention in state law enforcement matters" and eschewing "attempts by plaintiffs to  
 14 entangle federal courts in the operations of state law enforcement and criminal justice  
 15 institutions") and *Hawkins v. Comparet-Cassani*, 251 F.3d 1230, 1237 (9th Cir. 2001) (request  
 16 for "an injunction of state law enforcement matters" raises "federalism considerations" requiring  
 17 a showing of "the likelihood of irreparable injury in the absence of injunctive relief" under  
 18 *Lyons*). Likewise, *MedImmune, Inc. v. Genentech, Inc.*, 549 U.S. 118, 128 (2007) involved a  
 19 declaratory relief action in a patent royalty dispute, not a request for an injunction against state  
 20 law enforcement officials, and is therefore not relevant to the present dispute. Thus, the  
 21 authorities cited by Plaintiffs recognize the heightened requirement they must meet to obtain an  
 22 injunction of the type requested.

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23      <sup>2</sup> In their Opposition, Plaintiffs repeatedly refer to Defendants' "statutory and  
 24 constitutional duties as they relate to the AWCA." Opp., p. 8; see also p. 11. The sections of the  
 25 ACC referenced, paragraphs 77-79, contain only references to California statutes, not the United  
 26 States Constitution. Opp., p. 8, citing ACC ¶¶ 77-79. If the basis for Plaintiffs' suit is grounded  
 27 in state law, and not the United States Constitution, Plaintiffs face additional requirements to  
 28 demonstrate Article III jurisdiction. See *Cantrell v. City of Long Beach*, 241 F.3d 674, 684 (9th  
 Cir.2001) (recognizing that "the violation of a state-created legal right can, in itself, satisfy the  
 injury in fact requirement for standing under Article III" if the plaintiff has right to sue under the  
 state law). Here, Plaintiffs have not asserted any basis for standing to sue under California Penal  
 Code sections 30520 or 31115 (ACC ¶¶ 77-79), calling into question their standing in this Court.

1 Plaintiffs reduce the holding of *Lyons* to “every dog gets one bite” (Opp., p. 7),  
 2 fundamentally misapprehending the burden it establishes. Plaintiffs maintain that “there has  
 3 been, and continues to be, a credible threat of harm” such as “wrongful arrest, wrongful  
 4 confiscation of protected arms, chilling a fundamental right” for “every day” that the Department  
 5 of Justice has “failed to issue a clarifying bulletin and/or regulation.” Opp., p. 11. It maintains  
 6 that the single arrest of Plaintiff Haynie, and the two arrests of Plaintiff Richards establish a  
 7 “likelihood of reoccurrence.” Opp., p. 12.<sup>3</sup>

8 Plaintiffs fail to confront the holding of *Lyons*, which stated that “recognition of the need  
 9 for a proper balance between state and federal authority counsels restraint in the issuance of  
 10 injunctions against state officers engaged in the administration of the states’ criminal laws in the  
 11 absence of irreparable injury which is both great and immediate.” *City of Los Angeles v. Lyons*,  
 12 461 U.S. at 112. Plaintiffs’ references to credible threats or likelihood of reoccurrence do not  
 13 meet the *Lyons* standard for injunctive relief:

14 In order to establish an actual controversy in this case, Lyons would have had not  
 15 only to allege that he would have another encounter with the police but also to make  
 16 the incredible assertion either, (1) that *all* police officers in Los Angeles *always* choke  
 17 any citizen with whom they happen to have an encounter, whether for the purpose of  
 18 arrest, issuing a citation or for questioning or, (2) that the City ordered or authorized  
 19 police officers to act in such manner. Although Count V alleged that the City  
 20 authorized the use of the control holds in situations where deadly force was not  
 21 threatened, it did not indicate why Lyons might be realistically threatened by police  
 officers who acted within the strictures of the City’s policy. If, for example,  
 chokeholds were authorized to be used only to counter resistance to an arrest by a  
 suspect, or to thwart an effort to escape, any future threat to Lyons from the City’s  
 policy or from the conduct of police officers would be no more real than the  
 possibility that he would again have an encounter with the police and that either he  
 would illegally resist arrest or detention or the officers would disobey their  
 instructions and again render him unconscious without any provocation.

22 *Id.*, 461 U.S. at pp. 105-06, original emphasis.

23 The allegations in the ACC contain the same defects this Court found in the First Amended  
 24 Complaint. Specifically, Plaintiffs have not alleged that “*all* law enforcement officers in  
 25 California *always* wrongly arrest any citizen with whom they come into contact who is lawfully

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26 <sup>3</sup> Plaintiffs emphasize that Plaintiff Richards “was arrested twice,” suggesting that this  
 27 implies a higher likelihood of reoccurrence. Opp., p. 12. This Court has already rejected this  
 contention. See *Richards v. Harris*, 2012 WL 3074869 p \*4 (allegations about Richards’ second  
 28 arrest “will not suffice to establish standing to seek injunctive relief under *Lyons*”).

1 in possession of a weapon with a bullet button” or muzzle brake. (2011 WL 5038357, p. \*8,  
 2 original emphasis.) Plaintiffs re-assert their fear of being arrested for an AWCA violation, but  
 3 these fears are “speculative” and fail to show “a ‘likelihood of substantial and immediate  
 4 irreparable injury’” which is needed for standing to seek an injunction in federal court. *City of*  
 5 *Los Angeles v. Lyons*, 461 U.S. at 111. As before, the ACC must be dismissed for failing to  
 6 satisfy the requirements of *Lyons*.

### 7     **III. THE AWCA IS NOT UNCONSTITUTIONALLY VAGUE**

8       In their opening brief, Defendants observed that the AWCA had been upheld in response to  
 9 a vagueness challenge (Motion, p. 10, citing *Chaker v. Preciad*, 2010 WL 2491421 (C.D. Cal.  
 10 2010), and further observed that the statutes at issue contain lists of banned models and  
 11 descriptions of the characteristics or features on models not listed that would bring those weapons  
 12 within the scope of the AWCA (Motion, p. 10, citing Cal. Penal Code §§ 30510, 30515). In  
 13 response, Plaintiffs contend that their vagueness allegations have been mischaracterized. First,  
 14 Plaintiffs maintain that “only discrete and identifiable portions of the AWCA are  
 15 unconstitutionally vague,” and these identifiable “wrongs” can be addressed by the  
 16 “dissemination” of a “proper interpretation of the AWCA” to “local law enforcement agencies  
 17 and District Attorney offices throughout the state.” Opp., p. 13. Second, Plaintiffs maintain that  
 18 they have brought “an ‘as-applied’ challenge” and not a “facial challenge to the AWCA.” Opp.,  
 19 p. 13.

#### 20       **A. Plaintiffs’ Focus on Arrests Demonstrates the Fatal Flaw in their 21 Argument**

22       Plaintiffs focus on *arrests* under the AWCA, not criminal prosecutions. See, e.g., ACC at ¶  
 23 9 [“result in wrongful arrests . . .”]; ¶ 33 [“a reasonable fear that he would face future additional  
 24 arrests . . .”]; ¶ 77[“threatened by a repetition of wrongful arrests”]; ¶ 107 [“state of confusion  
 25 caused by current vague and ambiguous statutes/regulations continues to result in wrongful  
 26 arrests . . .”]. But wrongful arrests do not support a claim that the statute and its implementing  
 27 regulations are unconstitutionally vague. An arrest in the field occurs when an officer believes  
 28 that probable cause exists that a statute has been violated. Such a probable cause finding is not

1 the same thing as a legal determination that the technical aspects of the statute have been met. As  
 2 the California Court of Appeal observed:

3 We reject petitioner's contention that, “[b]ecause police officers [ ] charged with  
 4 enforcing [former] section 12370[ ] would not be capable of determining whether an  
 item meets the definition of ‘body armor,’ [former] section 12370 allows arbitrary  
 5 and discriminatory enforcement.” To arrest a person for violating former section  
 12370(a), a police officer need not “determine” whether the person’s protective vest  
 6 qualifies as “body armor” within the meaning of the statute. An arrest is authorized if  
 the officer has probable cause to believe that the person has been convicted of a  
 7 violent felony and is in possession of prohibited body armor. (§ 836, subd. (a)(3).) The  
 requisite probable cause exists when, as here, a person convicted of a violent  
 8 felony is in possession of what “is popularly called a ‘bulletproof vest.’” (Title 11, §  
 942, subd. (e).)

9 *In re Perdue*, 221 Cal. App. 4th 1070, 1080 (2013).

10 The Second Circuit case of *Dickerson v. Napolitano*, 604 F.3d 732, 745, n.15 (2d Cir. 2010)  
 11 made this point explicitly: “The constitutionally-protected right that must be implicated to  
 12 support a facial challenge must be the right infringed by *the statute* that was applied to the  
 13 plaintiffs, not the right infringed by *the arrest* for a violation of that statute.” *Id.* (original  
 14 emphasis). Plaintiffs fail to answer the citation of *Dickerson* or otherwise explain how an arrest  
 15 based upon a misinterpretation of a statute makes the statute itself unconstitutional.

16       **B. Alleged Police Misinterpretation of the AWCA Does Not Establish  
 17 Vagueness**

18 Plaintiffs note the “problems with identifying weapons regulated by the AWCA” identified  
 19 by police officials in exhibits to the ACC. Opp., p. 11, citing ACC Exhibits O and P. Both of the  
 20 exhibits referenced merely provide opinions about difficulties officers “in the field” face when  
 21 interpreting the AWCA. See ACC Exhibit O, ¶ 4 [stating “opinion” that “peace officers in the  
 22 field” face challenges in establishing whether a weapon features a “flash suppressor”]; ACC  
 23 Exhibit P, ¶ 6 [stating opinion that “it is difficult for officers in the field to determine if a firearm  
 24 that looks like an assault weapon is in fact an assault weapon”].

25 The mere fact that “a police officer may have some difficulty applying [a statute] on the  
 26 margins does not nearly establish” unconstitutional vagueness. (*First Vagabonds Church of God  
 27 v. City of Orlando* 610 F.3d 1274, 1286 (11th Cir. 2010), reinstated following rehearing en banc,  
 28 638 F.3d 756, 763.) A statute’s “constitutionality does not hang on whether every police officer

1 would understand the ordinance in the same way in every conceivable factual circumstance.  
 2 Absolute clarity is too much to expect from the drafters of laws, and perfect knowledge of the  
 3 fullest reach of the laws is too much to expect of even the most reasonable police officers.” *Ibid.*  
 4 Accordingly, some issues with officers misinterpreting the AWCA does not establish that the  
 5 AWCA is unconstitutionally vague.

6 With respect to the contention that the AWCA was vague “as-applied” to Plaintiffs Haynie  
 7 and Richards, the allegations of the ACC fail. As noted in the Motion at page 11, the undisputed  
 8 facts of this case show that following the arrests of Plaintiffs it was *an application of the AWCA*  
 9 to the facts of their arrests which led to charges being dropped or never filed. See ACC ¶¶ 28, 32,  
 10 54, 56, 69, 72. Thus, there is no question that the statute contains sufficient detail to provide  
 11 notice to citizens and law enforcement about what is prohibited. The facts alleged by Plaintiffs  
 12 do not demonstrate any defect in the statute; they demonstrate that the statute is ultimately quite  
 13 clear and effective. “As-applied” to Plaintiffs Haynie and Richards following their arrests, the  
 14 AWCA resulted in charges being dropped or never filed at all. Accordingly, their claims fail.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Since the law is not vague as applied to Plaintiffs, they cannot succeed on a facial vagueness challenge. See, e.g., *United States v. Dang*, 488 F.3d 1135, 1141 (9th Cir. 2007) (“[I]f the statute is constitutional as applied to the individual asserting the challenge, the statute is facially valid.”).

## CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, the ACC should be dismissed without leave to amend and judgment entered in favor of Defendants.

Dated: February 3, 2014

Respectfully Submitted,

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